

## Case Study

John is a 17 year old student, who has credits at the junior status and is currently attending Southwest Academy (SWA) with 90% attendance rate. Previously John attended Sierra Lindy and was in a self contained classroom. While in this placement John attended less than 30% of the time. John received multiple suspensions while at Sierra Lindy. John has been at SWA since January 13, 2013 when it was determined by his IEP that his needs would be better met in a therapeutic program with small class sizes, high levels of supervision, and an environment that is well structured, instructional, safe, engaging and responsive. John also benefits when transitions are highly structured and consistent.

John's interpersonal skills and work ethic are strengths for him. Academically, he has maintained Cs and Bs in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade. John also has a moderate hearing loss that requires him to wear a hearing aid. His speech is intelligible to others despite his hearing impairment. He knows sign language, but typically communicates with others by lip reading and responding verbally. John at times misunderstands what is said to him when receiving feedback and internalizes this as a negative comment about him. This can lead to inappropriate verbal outbursts and a fixation on the events that upset him.

The Basic Reading Inventory by Jerry Johns 10<sup>th</sup> edition was administered 9/26/13. John was able to read aloud words in isolation (word lists) at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level, his oral reading fluency (when reading a paragraph) is at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade instructional level. His comprehension after reading a paragraph aloud is at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. Silent reading comprehension is at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. Listening comprehension (when someone reads aloud to him) is at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. On 9/16/13 John was able to read 106 words correct on the AIMS WEB reading curriculum based measure. This score is below grade level but is an improvement of 46 words since spring 2013. John took the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and scored 643 Lexile. The SRI measures comprehension. The scores all indicate John has been working hard to improve reading comprehension since his last IEP. During the next year he should continue current interventions including Read 180 and decoding strategies.

John receives special education services under the disability of emotional and behavioral disabilities and secondary learning disability. His psychological report and placement paperwork has identified John has having an emotional and behavioral disorder as well as a specific learning disability in written expression, oral language processing, and reading. According to the WAIS-R administered on 09/10/13, John's performance IQ is in the high average range while his Verbal IQ is in the low average range.

According to the *Woodcock Johnson*, administered 9/15/13, his academic achievement in reading and written language is below average. John needs to use word identification strategies to decode multi-syllabic words. He fails to use word identification strategies to read unknown words and struggles with comprehension when reading text independently.

John is able to answer comprehension questions based on orally read material, such as stories read to him by a teacher. He is slow and hesitant when reading orally, especially when he is reading material that contains multi-syllable words. He has difficulty recalling details, making inferences, and drawing conclusions. He experiences success when provided with an assignment notebook, reading of tests,

reading support for long text passages assigned to be completed independently within a short time period, and assistance from a teacher for written assignments.

He can write simple sentences, but he has difficulty stringing sentences together to form a paragraph on a given topic. He digresses from the topic as his thoughts wander. John's written work shows that he has spelling errors of basic sight words, invented spellings, and limited punctuation skills. He understands and can compose topic sentences, detail sentences, and concluding sentences.

The Freedom from Distractibility Index Score (79) suggests that he has difficulty attending to presented with paper and pencil tasks. Tasks that are of high interest and hands-on, John does not have any problem attending. John needs reminders from his teachers and mother for completing his assigned school work, and at times becomes frustrated.

With the provision of the testing accommodations identified in John's IEP (extended time and separate testing location), he demonstrated proficiency on all end of course exams required for 10th and 11th grade. These findings suggest that John may need time limited supports after graduation from high school as he transitions into a post-secondary educational setting and employment.

He also performed in the high average range on the *Differential Aptitude Test* – Mechanical Comprehension and Spatial Reasoning subtests. These results suggest John has potential of meeting his post-secondary goals of being a self-employed welder.

He worked part-time with his uncle at his welding shop and expressed an interest in working in a similar environment after high school. He enjoyed working with others, doing manual labor, and listening to loud music while working. He exhibits strengths in the area of mechanical work.

Career assessments indicate that he is likely to be a serious, dedicated employee. At home, he fixes appliances around the house, which his mother appreciates. One time in the past year, John received criticism from his uncle because he was not consistently wearing appropriate safety gear. John did not accept the feedback well; he walked out of the shop and went home for the day.

John is most interested in racing cars on the weekends. He has never played sports, and does not have an interest in them other than watching stock car races on television. For the past few years, he and his friends have worked to fix up a car they bought from the junk yard for a few hundred dollars. They enter local races on the weekends to win cash prizes. John does not race the cars; he does the body work on them. He does not always wear the necessary protective gear when welding, which is dangerous. His uncle sometimes helps him with the more detailed welding work in his welding shop.

This hobby has prepared him with valuable vocational skills related to welding and automotives, but these races are illegal. The local police have begun to pay more attention to these events. John does not express any concern that he will be caught participating in the races. John's uncle and mother are concerned that he will get into trouble with the law, postponing his career plans.